Revelation

by: Flannery O'Connor

﻿Summary**:**  In this **short story,** Ruby Turpin, a **dynamic**, self-righteous, and southern woman, is seated in the waiting room to see the doctor for the ulcer on her husband Claud's leg. She strikes up a conversation with a "white trash woman" and a "pleasant woman." They lightly discuss the weather, cotton, and their hired hands. All the while, the pleasant woman's daughter, Mary Grace, a very **flat** character, is making contorted ugly faces at Mrs. Turpin. The **climatic** event occurs as they speak rudely about her; Mary Grace hurls her book at Mrs. Turpin and hits her above the eye. As the perceived **antagonist** is restrained by the doctor, she tells Mrs. Turpin, in deep **regional dialect**, "Go back to hell where you came from, you old wart hog!”

In the **epiphany,** Mary Grace’s statement rang true with Mrs. Turpin who thought that her statement was a message from God directly, who is trying to reach into her life and intervene. She then shuns the black people who pick cotton for her when they try to compliment her. She now understands that they are just trying to make her feel good, she is not actually pretty or a good person. The **symbol** of the dirty, nasty hog then occurs again. She, while washing off her hogs, realizes the terrible person that she has become, and she gets angry at God for it. But, before she returns to the house, she is converted.

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Flannery O' Connor's southern gothic **short stories** have many recurring **themes**. Both “Revelation” and “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” are similar in a variety of ways, from the personalities of their characters to the overall **themes** of the stories.

In the story A Good Man is Hard to Find, the **protagonist**; the grandmother is portrayed as one who sees herself as being better than others. Before the family trip to Florida the grandmother dresses herself up in her nice clothing so that if anything were to happen people would know that she was a lady. The Grandmother also thought that the family should go to Tennessee rather than Florida, despite her being the only family member that wanted to go there. She even went as far as asking Red Sam’s wife if she was ashamed of herself while the wife told June Star that she was cute. The grandmother puts herself on a pedestal, much like the **protagonist** from Revelation. In the Revelation Ruby Turpin sees herself as being better than most others in the room. She judges others around her by their looks and their personalities, ranking people of different classes and thanking God that He did not make her like them.

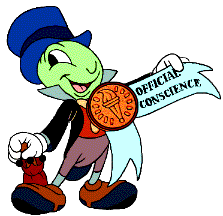
These stories were also relatable in that their **themes** are quite similar. Both A Good Man Is Hard to Find and Revelation have underlying meanings suggesting that those who think of themselves as down to heart, good people may come to realize that they are actually only looking out for themselves rather than others. For instance, in “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” the grandmother prides herself on being a good, church-going woman, and sees herself as trying to help the Misfit get saved, but when the grandmother is put face to face with The Misfit, she tries to convince him that he is a good person who can see the Lord not because she actually cares about his wellbeing, but because she wants to save her own life. Likewise in Revelation Ruby Turpin claims that she is always out to help people despite who they may be. She revels in the fact that God made her to be a helpful person, looking out for others whenever possible. In actuality it turns out that she is really only out to help herself. Mrs. Turpin only treats the black people who work for her nicely so that they will shower her with compliments. She judges people to make herself feel better about the way that she is, labeling people as ugly, fat, or white-trashy in her head.

Neither of these stories really have a **denouement**. The **climax** comes near end of the story and is never really resolved. “In A Good Man Is Hard to Find” the grandmother is murdered at the end and Revelation ends with Mrs. Turpin walking to the house from cleaning her hogs. Neither **conflict** is actually solved in the end.

Lastly, these two **short stories** compare in the vast incorporation of religion into them. In “A Good Man Is Hard to Find”, the grandmother is a churchgoer who ultimately attempts to convert a criminal, The Misfit, to Christianity during the **climax**. In Revelation Mrs. Turpin, when attacked and called a “wart hog from hell” by a girl in a doctor’s office, takes this as a sign from God and contemplates the kind of person that God actually wants in heaven.

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**In what ways did the stories relate to each other? (Think about the theme, type of characters, type of setting, etc.)**

Image:

The image we chose is that of Jiminy Cricket. He is the **omniscient** “Official Conscience” of Pinocchio in the Disney movie; he is someone that Pinocchio can talk to, in order to make important, moral decisions. Jiminy Cricket personifies a huge theme throughout both Flannery O’Connor’s short stories. In “A Good Man is Hard to Find,” the grandmother attempted to use her conscience to save her family, but they would not listen. In “Revelation,” Mrs. Turpin has been fooling her conscience into thinking that she is an amiable person and is living her life the way that God wants her to. It takes a young woman throwing a book at her and calling her a wart hog from Hell to understand the great moral mistakes that she is making in her life. If these characters had only had Jiminy Cricket to talk to, maybe they would not have been placed in such sticky situations.